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"In Deed and in Word": The Anti-Apartheid Movement at the University of Utah, 1978-1987

BY BENJAMIN HARRIS

One early June morning in 1978 Leon Brown, Jr., a twenty-seven-year-old African American student, requested a meeting with University of Utah President David P. Gardner. When President Gardner's assistant, Wendy Smith, asked what the meeting concerned, Brown politely indicated that he had questions about the University Investment Program. His concern was that the University of Utah held nearly $448,000 in stock with corporations that supported the exploitative and repressive policy of apartheid in South Africa and he explained that the university had a moral duty to divest, or sell off, these holdings.[1] When told that President Gardner was unavailable, Brown offered to wait.

Apartheid Never/Freedom Forever. This protest structure was erected on the University of Utah campus in 1986.

Meetings between students and adminis-

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[1] The idea to confront universities over their investment portfolios grew from the corporate divestment campaigns in the 1960s and 1970s when activists sought to persuade U.S. banks and corporations to sever all ties with the South African government. See Robert Massie, *Loosing the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years* (New York: Doubleday, 1997).

trators were not uncommon at the University of Utah, but Brown's insistence on seeing the president over a little-known university policy struck Wendy Smith as highly unusual and she promptly called university police. Minutes later, as police descended on the Park Administration Building, Brown left abruptly, telling Smith the administration would be forced to confront the issue.[2]

If Leon Brown's actions seemed odd to some at the University of Utah, student protest of South Africa's racial policy was not. For nearly three decades, students participated in religious, civil rights, and community organizations that formed the backbone of the U.S. anti-apartheid movement and, by 1986, forced hundreds of institutions to divest.[3] Despite such success, scholars have generally ignored the significance of student divestment campaigns, focusing instead on national organizations such as the American Committee on Africa or Trans-Africa and their influence on U.S. policy toward South Africa.[4] While these organizations are undoubtedly important to the history of the movement, a significant gap in the literature remains. Little has been done to explain how and why Americans at the grassroots became actively involved in the cause.[5] The purpose of this article, then, is to rectify the undervaluation of student activism within the anti-apartheid movement by reconstructing events during the 1980s at an institution at the grassroots—the University of Utah.

When classes resumed in the fall of 1978, so, too, did anti-apartheid agitation. Leon Brown, frustrated with President Gardner's refusal to discuss the University Investment Program, personally organized the first campus anti-apartheid organization, the Utah Committee for University Divestment (UCUD). The twenty-five member organization attempted to "facilitate further serious discussion and debate" on campus about U.S. business activities in South Africa through leafleting, educational films, and a lecture series, and repeatedly calling on the Gardner administration to divest.[6]

Against this backdrop of agitation over apartheid, Utah administrators began discussing the investment program. President Gardner formed an ad hoc advisory committee to review the university's South Africa policy and issue a report with recommendations for action. After several meetings, the committee members found an uneasy balance between competing

[2] Information Report Intelligence Investigation, February 23, 1978, David P. Gardner Papers, Box 57, Folder 3, University of Utah Archives.

[3] Jon Wiener. "Divestment Report Card: Students, Stocks, and Shanties" *The Nation* 243 (Oct. 11, 1986), 337. See also Eric Hirsch, "Sacrifice for the Cause: Group Processes, Recruitment, and Commitment in a Student Social Movement," *American Sociological Review* 55 (April 1990): 243-354; Tony Vellela, *New Voices: Student Political Activism in the '80s and '90s* (Boston: South End Press, 1988).

[4] For example, see Donald Culverson, *Contesting Apartheid: U.S. Activism, 1960-1987* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999); Steven Metz, "The Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Populist Instinct in American Politics," *Political Science Quarterly* 101 (Fall 1986): 379-95; Francis Nesbitt, *Race for Sanctions: African Americans against Apartheid, 1946-1994* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

[5] An important exception is Janice Love's influential book *The U.S. Anti-Apartheid Movement: Local Activism in Global Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1985).

[6] "Group Urges U. to Divest Itself of S. African Investments," *Salt Lake Tribune*, October, 21,1978.

positions. All agreed that apartheid was wrong and should be ended, but they also believed that complete divestment was not a viable solution. Citing the State Money Management Act of 1953, the committee concluded that the effect of divestment would be minimal as compared to the cost to the university.[7] In the end, the committee suggested retaining its financial holdings with the condition that the corporations involved sign the Sullivan Principles, an employment code of conduct for U.S. companies doing business in South Africa drafted in 1977 by General Motors board member Reverend Leon Sullivan. President Gardner then recommended this position to the Institutional Council on October 6.[8]

The Sullivan Principles drew bitter opposition from activists on the Utah campus who felt that such reforms would not significantly reduce the financial and psychological aid that American corporations provided to the South African government or change the fundamental structure of apartheid. When the Institutional Council (the governing body) voted in favor of Gardner's proposal on October 9, the UCUD circulated petitions and organized demonstrations to disrupt meetings of the Institutional Council, hoping to force the administration to reconsider the resolution.

In supporting the Sullivan Principles, the administration reduced the intensity of student divestment activism. Many members of the UCUD realized that the administration's posture was now fixed and the momentum established during the fall semester of 1978 faded. Moreover, several factors common to campus life acted to break the movement's stride. University holidays, the exam schedule, and summer vacation made it increasingly difficult for activists to maintain a strong presence on campus. A transient student population also hampered movement leadership, direction, and intensity. Utah students were, as well, susceptible to external priorities such as work and family. In this atmosphere, the UCUD found its support on campus slipping and as summer vacation approached, anti-apartheid activity at the University of Utah came to a halt.

For six years, anti-apartheid activity at the University of Utah lay moribund. Events in 1985, however, revived the movement. Widespread violence against black South Africans and dismay at President Ronald Reagan's foreign policy inspired many at the University of Utah in the fall of 1986, and anti-apartheid activism grew bolder and stronger on campus.

Dayne Goodwin was working as a staff member at the University of Utah and was actively involved in the Central America Solidarity Coalition to protest the Reagan Administration's involvement in Central America. Goodwin decided to form a new campus organization, which called on the

[7] The State Money Management Act of 1953 prevented universities from deciding policies based on political, moral, or ethical considerations. Cedric Davern to David P. Gardner, n.d., Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 1, Folder 1, University of Utah Archives.

[8] The Sullivan Principles called on corporations to provide equal pay for equal work, equal opportunity for advancement, equal educational rights, and to outlaw racially segregated facilities.

United States government, corporations, the state of Utah, and the University of Utah to end all support to the South African government. In September 1985, Goodwin and three others—students Michael Saperstein, Salem Ajluni, and professor Al Campbell—officially established the Coalition to Stop Apartheid (CSA).[9]

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David P. Gardner, President of the University of Utah, 1973-1983.

Given the distance between Salt Lake City and South Africa, how had Goodwin arrived at this moment? The violence in South Africa cannot fully answer this question. What had come together on campus had begun, for Goodwin, almost two decades before in classrooms at American University in Washington, D.C. Dayne Goodwin was born in 1946 in Madison, Wisconsin. His family moved thirteen times until his father finally settled the family in Logan after accepting a position at Utah State University in 1956. In high school, Goodwin was a serious and dedicated student, thoughtful and articulate, qualities that earned him a place in American University's selective School of International Service, a high-powered program aimed at training people for careers in the State Department.

As Goodwin focused on his career, he increasingly realized that he did not agree with U.S. foreign policy, particularly the war in Vietnam, and became convinced that he needed to oppose those policies. Dropping out of American University after three years, Goodwin was drawn to the anti-war movement and the Poor People's March on Washington in the spring of 1968. In 1970 Goodwin returned to Utah on a different track. "I came into contact with socialist ideas, left-wing ideas which led me to a critique of the social structure and the conviction there needed to be wide-scale social change."[10] He decided to devote his life to fighting for civil rights.

[9] Dayne Goodwin, interview by author, Salt Lake City, January 26, 2006.
[10] Ibid.

The CSA wasted no time confronting the university. In October, it sponsored a forum on campus to discuss the state of South Africa and invited students and the administration to respond publicly to calls for complete divestment. During the event, students charged the administration with skirting the divestment issue and demanded the university take a firm stand against apartheid. Anthony Morgan, executive assistant to President Peterson, fired back that the university would never make financial investment decisions based on political criteria. Activists had hoped the forum would politicize the campus but student apathy frustrated the CSA. Said one activist, "In the '60s, they [students] weren't afraid to voice their opinions and work for what they believed in. Today, lots of students feel it's not worth it because it might jeopardize their careers."[11] Part of the problem, activists believed, was the lack of information on events in South Africa. A Dan Jones and Associates poll conducted for the Hinckley Institute of Politics on campus found that 40 percent of Utah's students were "slightly knowledgeable" to "totally ignorant" of South Africa's racial problems. The poll also revealed students cared little for other issues such as the U.S. raid in Libya, abortion, or even campus tuition increases.[12] Education, CSA leaders decided, had to take priority before mobilization.

For weeks, CSA activists manned several tables around campus, passing out literature on South Africa and apartheid. But as activists quickly discovered, their efforts failed to mobilize students. As Christmas vacation approached, it seemed CSA would soon be defunct.

The spring of 1986, however, witnessed a return to activism. Heightened media attention to apartheid around the United States did make the issue more salient. Becoming aware of apartheid in South Africa and incensed at the ongoing violence, a few students rejected apathy for involvement. A reinvigorated CSA found heightened interest and support in its call for university divestiture and an end to South African apartheid. For years Utah students were docile and uninvolved. Now student activism became a visible choice for change.

The move toward activism became evident on February 11, 1986. Responding to repeated demands for complete divestment, the university Institutional Council invited CSA leaders to its meeting. Mike Saperstein, co-founder of CSA and a graduate student in economics, told the council "we feel that the apartheid system is not reformable [sic] in any meaningful sense. The Sullivan Principles are basically inadequate in ridding South Africa of apartheid."[13] Others like Una Stevenson claimed that total divestment of funds could bring about a peaceful solution. "If this doesn't occur," she said, "then there will be a revolution in South Africa like we've never seen before. And there will be your divestment—and your money will be

[11] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 3, Folder 1, University of Utah Archives.

[12] Ibid., Box 1, Folder 2.

[13] "Council passes apartheid resolution," *The Daily Utah Chronicle* (University of Utah), February 11, 1986.

absolutely no good to you."[14] Their arguments failed to persuade the Institutional Council. Citing testimony from university vice president for Administrative Services Walter P. Gnemi that the overwhelming majority of the university's investments were not in stocks but securities and certificates, the council unanimously passed a resolution which reaffirmed its support of human rights in South Africa and opposition to apartheid but also its faith in the Sullivan Principles.[15]

The council's decision had important consequences. On February 24 at 4:30 a.m., four students—Alan Chandler, Darin Dockstader, Connie Spencer, and Spencer Hammond—constructed a wooden-framed and cardboard shanty on the lawn between the Student Union Building and Orson Spencer Hall to dramatize the plight of black South Africans and to protest the university's investment policies. The group, calling itself the University of Utah Students Against Apartheid (SAA), produced a position paper that stated: "Believing in Coretta Scott King's words to Salt Lakers on February 6 that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, we have erected this shanty to protest apartheid." More pointedly, and somewhat defiantly, the petition announced that SAA "intend it [the shanty] to remain on campus until the University of Utah divests its holdings in corporations that do business in South Africa."[16] If aroused by CSA rhetoric and action, this group acted independently.

In retrospect, shanty construction seemed the best choice for a struggling campus movement. Despite their best efforts, activists had attracted little public attention and failed to mobilize large numbers of students. Yet, unlike sit-ins and petitions, shanties were effective at "communicating truth" about apartheid and, more importantly, had proven valuable in galvanizing opposition and repression on other campuses.[17] Student activists believed that similar success could be achieved at the University of Utah.

The shanty dubbed "Bishop Desmond Tutu Hall" was at the heart of campus and attracted much attention. "We staffed the shanty from about dawn on," recalled sophomore activist Darin Dockstader. "One of the first visitors we had was a representative from Student Affairs, who informed us that we had better exist as an official student organization in order to have a legitimate presence on campus."[18] Ironically, after completing the necessary paperwork to become an official campus organization, SAAers learned that they had failed to fill in a termination date for the organization on the form. This "error," many later recalled, allowed SAA and the shanty to remain on campus indefinitely.

[14] Ibid.

[15] "U club unhappy with Council ruling," *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, February 11, 1986. The University of Utah held stock in twelve companies with South African investments with a market value of $2,143,000 in 1986.

[16] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 3, Folder 7, University of Utah Archives.

[17] See especially Sarah Ann Soule, "The Student Anti-Apartheid Movement in the United States: Diffusion of Protest Tactics and Policy Reform" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1995).

[18] Darin Dockstader, phone interview by author, Salt Lake City, October 3, 2005.

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University of Utah Students in the early 1980s on the west side of Milton Bennion Hall.

Most importantly, the shanty drew the attention of the university administration, particularly President Chase Peterson. When asked about the presence of the protest shanty, Peterson responded that it served a useful purpose on campus and that he had no plans to remove it. He also expressed hope that the shanty would further the debate concerning the "untidy" issue of apartheid. Quoting John Milton, Peterson stated: "where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions…all are essential in a free and open campus environment." Yet, while he fully supported the right to academic freedom of expression, Peterson opposed decision-making based on political considerations. Peterson believed that even if the University of Utah were to try to influence other institutions, the impact would be minimal. Moreover, he insisted that Africans were divided on the merits of corporate disinvestment, and American corporations could have a positive effect on the South African regime by implementing fair employment principles.[19] The shanty's presence on campus revived the fledgling anti-apartheid movement, and the CSA took the opportunity to create structure and better coordinate the cause. CSA felt that a viable anti-apartheid movement demanded effective communication so that it and SAA could share ideas and resources. Yet, while shared outrage over university policy brought the two groups into contact, this was often not sufficient to overcome the groups' differences in personality, philosophy, and style. Underlying these tensions was a fundamental discrepancy about

[19] "U. president stoutly defends dissent and the right to invest in South Africa," *Deseret News*, March 5, 1986.

the main objective of the movement. CSA, comprised of older, more experienced activists, was more hierarchically minded and fundamentally a political group aimed at ending U.S. support for the racist South African government. Thus, divestment was merely a part of a larger vision that dictated that activists unite under a more formal organization that could coordinate political actions and speak for the movement with a single voice. Such a broad vision also entailed networking with other sympathetic leftist organizations to share resources. In contrast, SAA was comprised of younger, less experienced student activists with only a divestment agenda. Having existed less than twenty-four hours, SAA lacked a formal organizational structure, though it seemed to many that Alan Chandler assumed the leading role and assigned others to ad hoc tasks.

Much of the tension between CSA and SAA derived from differences in style. SAA was reluctant to accept direction from a "bunch of radicals" that desired to build a sustainable movement but lacked the necessary creativity. CSA, on the other hand, felt betrayed that an upstart student group without prior experience in activism would not follow its lead. Said Goodwin: "Here I was: I was fifteen to twenty years older than most of those people. Up comes this younger, more privileged group of students who expected immediate results. I think they were ignoring [CSA's] advice."[20] The conflicts that developed between CSA and SAA threatened to undermine the strength and effectiveness of the campus movement's ability to challenge and defeat the university's investment policy—one issue that both organizations agreed was an immediate problem in need of resolution. But it would be misleading to exaggerate the discord between the groups. In most instances, relations between activists were complementary and respectful. Reflecting back on the issue, one activist stated: "things could have gone to Hell. People could have been very egotistical. I've been involved in many organizations and, in this case, the shit did not hit the fan."[21] As the divestiture controversy heated up, both CSA and SAA agreed to present a unified front on campus.[22]

The shanty served as the perfect tool for CSA and SAA to mobilize the campus community. Chris Allen, in an editorial in the *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, admitted that despite his conservatism, the shanty had forced him to examine his political views and to take a stand. He decided: "individually and collectively, we also must wash our hands of the blood of apartheid and dedicate ourselves…to hasten the fall of this evil system."[23]

Mark Nelson's story illustrates a link between involvement in the anti-

[20] Goodwin interview.

[21] Mark Nelson, interview by author, Salt Lake City, October 22, 2005.

[22] There exist differing interpretations concerning the relationship between CSA and SAA. Some recall that members of both organizations eventually formed one organization (though they retained both CSA and SAA in their name: CSA/SAA). Others argue that both groups remained autonomous but collaborated on campus projects.

[23] "U. must wash its hands of blood by hastening the fall of apartheid," *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, February 27, 1985.

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Winnie Mandela Hall. Shanty built in 1986 by students protesting apartheid in South Africa.

apartheid movement and later social activism. "I was an undergraduate in the honors program taking upper-division economics," he recalled, "and felt like I didn't have time to understand what was going on."[24] The shanty served as Nelson's political awakening. Taking a more active interest in apartheid, Nelson put his heart and soul into the movement. He even persuaded his wife Ruth to join the movement. This experience, he vividly remembered twenty years later, dramatically changed his life.

Allen and Nelson joined a handful of like-minded activists on the lawn outside of the Olpin Student Union on February 28 for the first campus "Divestment Day" in which students planned to erect another shanty. The previous night, a campus newspaper reporter witnessed students Lara Stein and Camilla Hutton—both natives of South Africa—attempting to tear down the shanty walls. CSA/SAA gained much free publicity from this act of defiance. For days, *The Daily Utah Chronicle* allocated generous space to the event, extensively reporting accusations and reactions from all sides. The women attempted to justify their actions, asserting that CSA/SAA knew "absolutely nothing" about events taking place in South Africa.[25] CSA/SAA responded that this incident exemplified events taking place in South Africa on a grander scale.

Many believed that activists were merely mimicking events across the nation and had no real concern for black South Africans. They charged that student protests were largely theatrical, designed to revive the radical days of the 1960s because it was the "cool" thing to do.[26]

A variety of conservatives—including members of the John Birch Society, CAUSA (the political front for Reverend Moon's Unification Church), and the Ultra-Conservative Center for Constitutional Studies (formerly the Freeman Institute under the direction of Cleon Skousen)—

[24] Nelson interview

[25] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 1, Folder 1, University of Utah Archives.

[26] Some students took this position even farther, arguing: "deep down inside, most, if not all, of the male supporters of the divestiture movement are only in it so they can get into a female supporters' [*sic*] pants." "Anti-apartheid is 'cool,'" *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, March 15, 1986.

presented the most vocal challenge.[27] Their letters to the editors of *The Daily Utah Chronicle* and the *Deseret News* depicted activists as dangerous subversives attempting to control world shipping and spread communism to South Africa.[28]

Although such rhetoric was dismissed by CSA/SAA, the fear of communism led some on campus to launch occasional attacks against its supposed sympathizers. On April 3 and again five days later, CSA/SAA reported to Salt Lake City police that unknown intruders broke into the apartment of Benjamin Medina, a university student and political activist who spoke in favor of the campus anti-apartheid movement. His political artwork was ripped and broken and intruders spray-painted furniture, clothing, photographs, and his rare book collection. On the wall, the vandals left a note warning Medina to curb his "leftist pinko activities."[29]

Critics of the campus movement failed to understand the roots of student activism. The beliefs first expressed in SAA's political manifesto, that direct action could help bring freedom and equality to South Africa, inspired many students to join the movement. There were also a few who embraced dissident politics as a way of gaining campus notoriety or revolting against the values with which they were raised. This was clearly the case for Chris Allen, whose editorial reflected disdain for his family's conservatism.[30]

More significantly, anti-apartheid activism represented a positive community that helped break down feelings of social and cultural isolation. Reflecting back on the roughly two year period of activity, graduate student and CSA co-founder Salem Ajluni fondly recalls, "Those were very special and formative years for me…Those years, more than any other, confirmed for me how 'American' my identity had become…it was during the years of the anti-apartheid movement in Utah that a balance was tipped toward confirmation of my 'idigeneity.'"[31]

By March 1986, the activities of CSA/SAA had made an impact on campus. Yet, the number of students who became actively involved in anti-apartheid activity remained quite small. With the daily demands of school, family, and work, apartheid remained a distant issue for most students. Activist Ruth Heidt expressed her frustration with married students. Known among her fellow activists as the "Mother Mormon for divestment," Heidt repeatedly urged parents, especially Mormons, at the university to get involved in the effort to end apartheid in South Africa for moral and ethical reasons. "Many Mormons have strong opinions on this

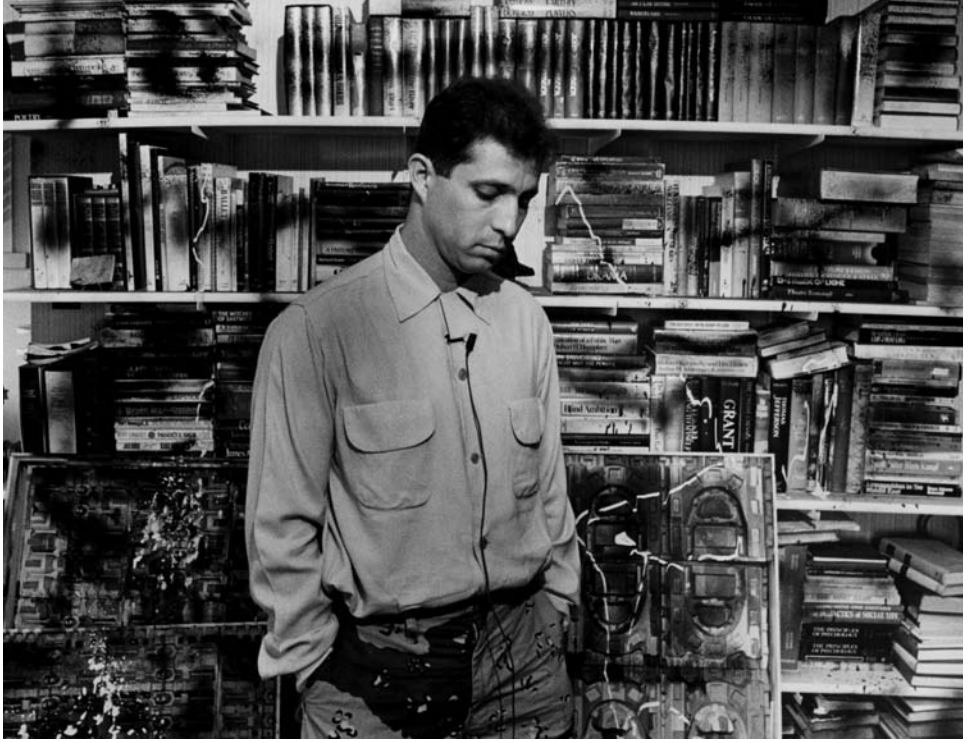
[27] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 2, Folder 9, University of Utah Archives.

[28] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 1, Folder 2, University of Utah Archives.

[29] Despite the destruction of property, Medina continued to sell his artwork to support the student anti-apartheid movement. "Vandals trash apartment and art work of U. student involved in shanty protest," *Deseret News*, April, 3,1986.

[30] "U. must wash its hands of blood by hastening the fall of apartheid," *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, February 27,1985.

[31] Salem Ajluni, email message to author, February 5, 2006.



LYNN R. JOHNSON, *SALT LAKE TRIBUNE*

Ben Medina, University of Utah student activist.

issue, but they are unwilling to speak out. I'm hoping to show that this is not only for liberals and radicals, but for the common people."[32]

Despite such obstacles, CSA/SAA pressed on. The shanty had created a buzz on campus that activists sought to exploit and for the next two months, CSA/SAA invested much of its energy in the construction of a shantytown to drive home the brutality of South African racism.[33] Activists also picketed, rallied, and lobbied to attract media attention to their cause. The largest protest occurred on March 13, 1986. Fifty students and faculty members congregated around the shanties early in the morning to prepare for the first large-scale political demonstration on the university campus since the Vietnam War. At 1 p.m. on the granite steps of the university's Park Administration building, activists presented President Peterson with a petition containing 1,722 signatures that asked the Institutional Council to divest. Nineteen eighty-four Democratic vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro was also on hand to provide support for the student demonstration. "You're all terrific to take a stand and let your voice be heard," she said. "I congratulate you. This is probably the most American thing you can be doing."[34]

Adding to CSA/SAA's prestige were two well-publicized national events, the Spring Mobilization '86 and testimony before the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid. On April 23, members of CSA/SAA participated in a march in San Francisco from Mission Park to

[32] "Anti-apartheid protesters greet those arrested at IC meeting," *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, May 12, 1987.

[33] Between February 1986 and June 1986, three shanties would be constructed on campus.

[34] Geraldine Ferraro accepted an invitation by SAA to visit the shanty after a speech sponsored by the University of Utah's Women's Resource Center. "Anti-Apartheid Students Find Sympathetic Ear in Ferraro, Not Peterson," *Salt Lake Tribune* March, 14, 1986.

the Civic Center in solidarity with groups protesting U.S. military intervention in Central America. While most of the participants were Californians, Salem Ajluni told *The Daily Utah Chronicle* "the Utah contingency made up the largest out-of-state group to attend the march."[35] Then, on June 27, Connie Spencer and Darin Dockstader, co-chairs of SAA, joined representatives from twenty-five other universities in New York City to report on its progress toward divestiture.[36]

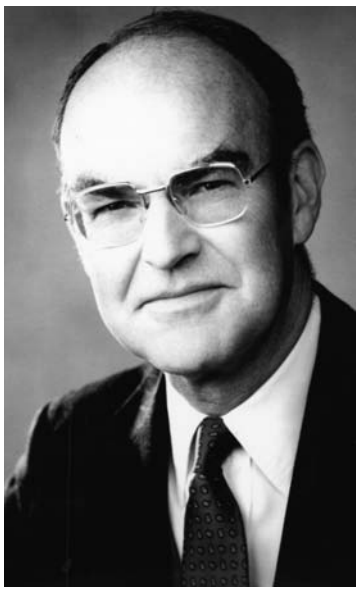
Many in CSA/SAA engaged in quieter, less controversial activities such as letter writing, film screenings, benefit concerts, and sponsoring discussion groups to raise campus awareness. In doing so, CSA/SAA attracted a number of individuals who may have remained outside of the movement had it only engaged in confrontation. These tactics reflected the need to appeal to different campus constituents and still provide a sense of efficacy for participants.

CSA/SAA also attempted to gain acceptance within the greater Salt Lake City community. In a series of community forums, activists invited the public to share views on the apartheid question and to debate the pros and cons of divesting university funds. The largest forum took place on Thursday, April 11, in the Union Ballroom and featured Palmer DePaulis, mayor of Salt Lake City, Gordon Ottley, president of Central Federation Utah AFL-CIO, Utah Senator Terry Williams, E.K. Hunt, professor of economics, and a cross-section of the student population.[37] Despite CSA/SAA's intention to look beyond campus and encourage people to participate, the shanties remained the focal point of protest.

From the day the shanties appeared on campus, student activists had expected controversy. A string of violent incidents, however, added a new dimension to the struggle. Early in the morning of March 8, 1986, a Molotov cocktail was thrown at one of the wooden-framed shanties, exploding ten feet from where Darin Dockstader and Spencer Hammond stood. "We were standing inside the door talking when we heard the sound of breaking glass and a whoosh of fire. I went running out of the shanty and there was a big fire on the sidewalk."[38] Two weeks later arsonists struck again. Nobody was inside but a firebomb destroyed a considerable portion of the structure.[39] Then, in May, CSA/SAA reported that vandals had destroyed all of the shanties. Eye-witnesses pointed to members of the Beta Theta Pi and Sigma Nu fraternities as the culprits while articles in the campus newspaper speculated that right-wingers had destroyed the shanties though no one was ever officially charged in the incident.[40]

Responding to the string of violent incidents, President Peterson took a

[35] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 1, Folder 1, University of Utah Archives.
[36] "U.anti-apartheid movement goes to NYC," *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, July 9, 1986.
[37] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 1, Folder 4, University of Utah Archives.
[38] "Firebomb thrown at U. protest shanties," *Deseret News*, March 9, 1986.
[39] "Fire Scorches Protest Shanty at U.; 2nd Incident in as Many Weeks," *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 20, 1986.
[40] "Shanties Destroyed, Rebuilt Again," *The Collegiate* (University of Utah), June 2, 1986.



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Chase Peterson, President of the University of Utah, 1983-1991.

strong stand on the issue. He announced that the shanties were useful for calling attention to the divestiture controversy but had become an "attractive nuisance."[41] His comments were telling as they indicated a shift in administration policy. In a letter to SAA representative Darin Dockstader, Peterson encouraged CSA/SAA to continue with its plans to raise awareness about apartheid and human rights on campus but asked whether a viable alternative was available. He suggested that students could wear hats with anti-apartheid slogans or the university could designate a permanent spot where students could engage in free speech.[42] In its reply, CSA/SAA argued that the university was morally obligated to take a stand against apartheid and insisted that activists would not yield ground.

The negotiation process proved difficult and time consuming. Administrators were caught between an increasingly vocal and well-organized student group and pressure from Utah legislators and citizens to maintain control on campus. An article in the *Salt Lake Tribune* blamed Chase Peterson for not immediately removing the "clandestinely-erected" shanties and allowing students "unlimited license for protest."[43] As a publicly funded institution, the university was vulnerable to such criticism and sought to maintain the semblance of order while protecting the right of dissent and academic freedom.

What furthered the conflict between CSA/SAA and the university administration were their very different answers to the question, "How should the United States respond to events in South Africa?" Activists claimed that, as an institution charged with the development of responsible citizens, the university had a moral duty to divest. Conversely, the university argued that it should take no part in such a debate. Moral concerns about apartheid and divestiture, administrators believed, were not the province of a public institution. In a report to the Senate Executive Committee, Peterson outlined a three-point argument against divestiture. He said that approximately $10,656.26 was spent on surveillance and police protection for the shanties at a time when the state legislature had cut the university's budget.[44] In addition, information obtained from the Investor Responsibility Research Center in Washington, D.C., warned that reducing

[41] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 1, Folder 2, University of Utah Archives.
[42] Ibid., Box 3, Folder 7.
[43] "Students' Idealism Blinds them to Shanties Issue," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August, 25, 1986.

the university's stock portfolio would result in substantial negative long-term effects. Finally, Peterson asserted that the university should not hold U.S. corporations "hostage" when South Africa was the real culprit. The best course of action, in Peterson's estimation, was to make sure that all university investments were in companies rated as making progress under the Sullivan Principles.[45]

Peterson also presented the committee with possible short- and long-term plans for effectively addressing anti-apartheid protests. He stated that the administration was sincere in its desire to continue free speech on campus but viewed the shanties as an immediate threat to the safety of university students. He professed that administrators were trying to persuade students to take the shanties down voluntarily in exchange for a seat on the university Investor Responsibility Committee (a subcommittee created to ensure that all university investments fell under the Sullivan Principles). In addition, Peterson noted that the administration was diligently working to formulate clear-cut regulations governing the use of university facilities.[46]

On July 20, 1986, Alan Edwards of the Utah State Department of Administrative Services, Office of Risk Management, informed Peterson that the university risked losing its liability coverage for any accident that concerned the shanties. The administration knew the decisive moment had arrived. As Peterson confided in a letter to a former colleague at Harvard University, "the University is rapidly approaching a crisis of decision with ramifications of great academic significance." Peterson opined that he had no other choice but to inform students that the shanties would be removed before the next school year.[47] Later that day, Peterson dashed off another letter to CSA/SAA requesting that both sides meet to determine the fate of the shanties.

On August 6, 1986, Mark Nelson and Dayne Goodwin met with President Peterson and Vice President for University Relations Ted Capener in the Park Administration building. Peterson assured the activists that he would commit every resource to the preservation of free speech on campus. Yet, he reiterated that free speech was not the issue. Rather, the administration's primary concern was the violence associated with the presence of the shanties and the potential loss of insurance. Nelson, fearing that the university had already made its decision, responded with a number

[44] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 3, Folder 3, University of Utah Archives.

[45] Chase Peterson to the Senate Executive Committee, 1985-1987, Chase Peterson papers, Box 12, Folder 8, University of Utah Archives. In fact, the university continued to purchase stock in companies with operations in South Africa, which violated university policy. In a memo to Chase Peterson on July 14, A.E. Rothermich, who served as director of administrative policies, mentions that the university had bought stock in USX Corporation, Squibb, and Pfizer.

[46] Undated correspondence between Chase Peterson and Virginia Smith, Ted Capener papers, University of Utah Archives.

[47] Chase Peterson to Chris Foreman, n.d. Chase Peterson papers, Box 12, Folder 5, University of Utah Archives.

of alternatives: CSA/SAA could provide its own insurance and security protection; the activists would agree to remove all but one protest shanty to limit the costs associated with surveillance and protection. But the administration was not in a conciliatory mood and Peterson issued an ultimatum: students would remove the shanties within twenty-four hours or the university would tear them down.[48]

The activists were ready. In the days leading up to the meeting with university officials, CSA/SAA had decided that it would listen to the administration's position but would not immediately respond. As members of an organization devoted to participatory democracy, all agreed that the entire group would be involved in the decision- making. It was also decided that, in case the university made a unilateral decision regarding the shanties, CSA/SAA would seek legal counsel. The task fell to Alan Chandler. The night before the meeting, Chandler contacted local attorney Brian Barnard of the Utah Legal Clinic. They agreed that the university would violate students' First and Fourteenth Amendment rights if the shanties were removed. Barnard, a human rights advocate who had followed the events on campus closely, agreed to represent CSA/SAA and worked overnight to prepare the case.

Peterson's ultimatum was met with a lawsuit. Brian Barnard filed a motion in district court for a temporary restraining order on behalf of CSA/SAA to restrict the university from removing the shanties. Utah's Assistant Attorney General William T. Evans, representing the university, requested that the court deny the order because students had not filed a protective bond—a legal formality required in case the university was "injured" as a result of the restraining order. On August 9, Judge Aldon J. Anderson granted the restraining order stating that "the plaintiffs may suffer immediate and irreparable harm to a protected First Amendment right" but ordered students to post a one thousand dollar bond.[49]

The bond presented a challenge to student activists who relied primarily on fundraisers and were stretched for resources. Fortunately, sympathetic faculty members—E.K. Hunt, Ed Firmage, J. Dennis Willigan, J.D. Williams, Michael Lamb, and Alfred Emery—stepped in to support the students. Many of these professors had participated in panel discussions and some even demonstrated in support of the movement. The funds allowed, for the first time, a student anti-apartheid group to challenge legally a university over the shanty issue.[50]

On August 29 at 9:30 a.m., CSA/SAA representatives, university administrators, and interested community members packed Judge Aldon

[48] Ted Capener to Chase Peterson, "Re: August 6 meeting," unprocessed collection, University of Utah Archives.

[49] *University of Utah Students Against Apartheid v. Chase Peterson*, 649 F. Supp. 1200 (C.D. Ut. 1986).

[50] There were a handful of lawsuits whereby universities and colleges sued anti-apartheid activists for trespassing but no anti-apartheid organization had ever taken the offensive.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, J. WILLARD MARRIOTT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Free South Africa.

Anderson's courtroom, and during the next several months, the legal proceedings surrounding the shanties played out.[51] Assistant Attorney General Evans told the court that the shanties were costly to the university, invited violence, and were not protected forms of free speech. Brian Barnard countered that the shanties represented forms of symbolic speech (like hanging an American flag upside-down or burning a draft card) protected under the First and Fourteenth Amendments. On December 8, Anderson presented his decision. He declared that the university did not have "clearly stated, non-discriminatory rules and regulations on free expression as to time, place, and manner" and thus ruled in favor of CSA/SAA.[52] But, he ordered the shanties to be removed each night to prevent further violence. He also advised the university to create more applicable time and place regulations to govern future protest activities.[53]

Members of CSA/SAA had reason to be proud of their accomplishments. The previous spring, activists and administrators were deadlocked in debate over the existence of the shanties. The court case brought a partial victory. The movement was also bolstered by national events such as the passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act over President Reagan's veto and the announcement that large firms such as General Motors and IBM had decided to withdraw from South Africa, on account of the deteriorating conditions in South Africa and economic pressure from within the United States.[54] Nevertheless, CSA/SAA struggled to attain their real goal—university divestment.

In April 1987, the movement approached a crossroads. Though participation was constant, CSA/SAA's activities remained limited. "It was

[51] Brian Barnard, interview by author, Salt Lake City, February 6, 2006.

[52] *University of Utah Students Against Apartheid v. Chase Peterson*, 649 F. Supp. 1200 (C.D. Ut. 1986).

[53] The university would form an ad hoc committee headed by Professor John Flynn to draft new time and place regulations. Approved on January 5, 1987, the regulations stated that students must staff any structure they erect during regular school daytime hours and must apply for a renewable thirty-day permit.

[54] *Wall Street Journal*, October 21, 1986.

approaching summer," says Tom Price, "and we knew we needed to do something dramatic that would earn us a lot of leverage." Yet, there was uncertainty as to what course of action to take. During one of CSA/SAA's weekly strategy sessions, Tom Price, Roy Kasten, Miriam Harper, and others expressed their desire to confront directly the Institutional Council during its final meeting at the Alumni House in hopes of getting a resolution before the end of the school year. Moreover, the activists were willing to risk arrest in order to achieve their goal. Others, like Dayne Goodwin, still committed to peaceful protest wondered about the usefulness of this tactic and cautioned students against the idea. "I told them you are risking your college degree…but when people determined to do it, of course, then I supported them."[55]

On the morning of May 11, student protestors congregated outside the Alumni House waiving protest signs to urge the Institutional Council to take a firm stand against South African apartheid. As the council adjourned for lunch, eight student activists—Kathy Aldous, Dano Blanchard, Roy Kasten, Darin Dockstader, Tom Price, Celeste Staley, Ruth Heidt, and Andrew Hunt—entered the meeting room and took seats at the council table. Each held a prepared statement listing reasons for divestiture. "We have a statement we would like to read," Kasten told council chair John Dahlstrom when the meeting was called to order. When asked if they were on the agenda, Kasten replied no and began reading the statement, ignoring Dahlstrom's repeated calls for order and threats to have the students removed.[56]

Immediately after Kasten's arrest, another student began reading where Kasten left off. In all, four protesters read from the statement and were arrested. Four others who had the statement taken from them before they could read were told they were not under arrest unless they continued to disrupt the meeting. The students paused and then broke into a chant of "Divest Now!" The first three activists to be marched outside in police custody smiled and waved to the crowd. Before getting into the police car, activist Dano Blanchard raised a defiant fist to the cheers and applause from other demonstrators. Tom Price yelled that being arrested would "teach the Institutional Council that they can't [sic] keep screwing people over."[57] After the students were taken away, the remaining demonstrators began yelling in unison, "Trustees, you know, there's blood on your portfolio!" and "We see, we see, the IC hates democracy!" One by one, the students were marched out of the Alumni House to awaiting demonstrators. The media, which had been alerted earlier in the day to the protest, captured the scene for print and television.

The demonstration did little to sway administrators. The Institutional

[55] Goodwin interview.
[56] "Students busted for disrupting IC," *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, May 12, 1987.
[57] Ibid.

Council dismissed the protest as a minor agitation and refused to acknowledge students' demands. President Peterson expressed disappointment that reason had been lost. The university also charged the eight students with class-B misdemeanors, which carried a possible fine of $299. Yet, the demonstration had a pronounced effect on campus. The stories about it appearing in the city's media angered both community members and university alumni who demanded that the university put an end to the "crisis" on campus. The demonstration also occurred in the midst of stories from other schools that had decided to divest, adding to the impression that the time had come for change.[58]

A month later, in a stunning announcement on Tuesday, June 9, the Institutional Council voted eight to one to divest all holdings in corporations with operations in South Africa. Activists were thrilled. CSA/SAA had rallied sympathetic students, faculty, and community members against authorities' persistent refusal to divest and claimed an important, though long-overdue victory.

By July 1987, the movement had largely dissolved, although a few activists would continue the fight to end apartheid in South Africa. Unlike the student movement of the 1970s, the campus anti-apartheid movement's demise was a product of its success. Divestment was the immediate goal and, with success, most activists disbanded, particularly after the charges were dropped against those arrested at the university's Alumni House.

Despite the dissolution of CSA/SAA, the effects of the anti-apartheid movement were not lost on campus. There remained a few committed students who, thrilled with their recent victory, turned their sights on other pressing social issues such as the presence of the Aryan Nations in Salt Lake City, homophobia, and the Nuclear Test Site in Nevada. The university also weighed in publicly on the significance of the anti-apartheid movement. The Institutional Council argued that its decision to divest was independent of campus anti-apartheid activity and was based largely on national political events and the actions of other academic institutions that had determined that the Sullivan Principles were no longer a viable alternative.[59] Privately, however, council members told a different story. As council member Donald Pugh admitted, there was general agreement that the council was forced to take a stand on the issues of apartheid and divestiture. "While a university's best interests are served by not taking a political action, we had gotten ourselves into a political action, like it or not…."[60] The Institutional Council's ruling was also a response to widespread campus support for divestment. Anti-apartheid activists had gained crucial

[58] Vellela, *New Voices*, 34; The University of California system voted to divest approximately $3.1 billion in stocks and bonds in twelve companies with ties to South Africa. Divestment also occurred at the University of North Carolina, Illinois, and Florida.

[59] Prior to the Institutional Council's decision, 119 colleges and universities had withdrawn nearly five hundred million dollars from companies with operations in South Africa. Massie, *Loosing the Bonds*, 621.

[60] Students Against Apartheid Collection, Box 1, Folder 3, University of Utah Archives.

allies in the university's Academic Senate and on the campus newspaper and thus effectively brought pressure and public opinion to bear on the university, forcing a recalcitrant administration to respond. Activists took a measure of justifiable pride in knowing that their sustained challenge to the university's investment policy had succeeded. A week after the Council's decision, the university had divested one-fifth of its stock in companies with ties to South Africa. At the end of August 1987, the university had withdrawn the remainder of its investments.[61] A small group of activists had succeeded in rallying sufficient support from students and faculty to challenge campus authority. If in public denial about the success of mobilization, administrators had capitulated to effective protest.

The campus movement was directly responsible for a legal reexamination of campus speech codes and symbolic speech. Judge Aldon Anderson's decision that the shanties were protected under the First and Fourteenth Amendments set a precedent that allowed shanties to remain on other campuses.[62] Moreover, the movement also promoted greater educational awareness about issues of social justice on campus, even though few students actively participated. As one participant recalled: "I think we were successful in creating occasions for discussions about race, rights, and duties which might otherwise not have taken place."[63]

Perhaps the most profound impact of the movement was expanding the base of grassroots activism among university students. Through political participation, a small group of students became part of the activist subculture. For others, participation in the movement strengthened their commitment to grassroots activism. As Darin Dockstader recalled: "People's lives were dramatically transformed. The experience of coordinating and leading an organized activist movement was powerful. I learned to organize and motivate people, and felt the satisfaction of seeing an important task fulfilled."[64]

[61] Chase Peterson to Ted Capener, n.d., unprocessed collection, University of Utah Archives.
[62] Wiener, "Students, Stocks, and Shanties," 338.
[63] Dockstader interview.
[64] Ibid.